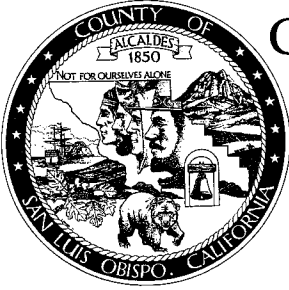


**COUNTY OF SAN LUIS OBISPO BOARD OF SUPERVISORS
AGENDA ITEM TRANSMITTAL**

(1) DEPARTMENT Health Agency/Public Health Department	(2) MEETING DATE March 7, 2006	(3) CONTACT/PHONE Marsha Bollinger, 781-4200
(4) SUBJECT Request to approve authorization of a Disease Prevention Demonstration Project and Syringe Exchange Project		
(5) SUMMARY OF REQUEST Approximately 324 individuals in SLO County are estimated to have been infected with HIV since the first AIDS case was reported in 1983. Of that number, more than 3/4s has been diagnosed with AIDS. More than 28% of people currently living with AIDS in SLO County attribute their infection to injection drug use. Another disease, which is affected by injection drug use, is Hepatitis C. There have been 1,496 cases of Hepatitis C reported in SLO County since 1996. The US Public Health Service recommends that individuals who inject drugs use a new, sterile syringe for each injection to prevent the transmission of blood-borne pathogens such as HIV and Hepatitis C. SB 1159 allows access to new, sterile syringes through the proposed Disease Prevention Demonstration Project, allowing Pharmacists to sell ten (10) or fewer hypodermic needles or syringes. AB 547 allows counties and cities to authorize programs that allow injection drug users to exchange needles they have used to inject drugs for clean needles, in consultation with the State Department of Health Services.		
(6) RECOMMENDED ACTION Recommended that the Board authorize 1) the Health Agency to develop and implement a local Disease Prevention Demonstration Project (DPDP) as authorized by SB 1159, allowing pharmacists to sell ten (10) or fewer hypodermic needles or syringes, and 2) the legal status for the development of a program that exchanges used syringes and needles for clean syringes and needles, as authorized by AB 547.		
(7) FUNDING SOURCE(S) N/A	(8) CURRENT YEAR COST None	(9) ANNUAL COST None
(10) BUDGETED? <input type="checkbox"/> YES <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> N/A <input type="checkbox"/> NO		
(11) OTHER AGENCY/ADVISORY GROUP INVOLVEMENT (LIST): The Public Health Department and the Drug and Alcohol Services Programs of the Health Agency will collaborate on these projects.		
(12) WILL REQUEST REQUIRE ADDITIONAL STAFF? <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/> Yes, How Many? <input type="checkbox"/> Permanent <input type="checkbox"/> Limited Term <input type="checkbox"/> Contract <input type="checkbox"/> Temporary Help		
(13) SUPERVISOR DISTRICT(S) 1st, 2nd, 3rd, 4th, 5th, All	(14) LOCATION MAP <input type="checkbox"/> Attached <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> N/A	
(15) AGENDA PLACEMENT <input type="checkbox"/> Consent <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Presentation	(16) EXECUTED DOCUMENTS <input type="checkbox"/> Resolutions (Orig + 4 copies) <input type="checkbox"/> Contracts (Orig + 4 copies) <input type="checkbox"/> Ordinances (Orig + 4 copies) <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> N/A	
(17) NEED EXTRA EXECUTED COPIES? <input type="checkbox"/> Number: <input type="checkbox"/> Attached <input type="checkbox"/> N/A	(18) APPROPRIATION TRANSFER REQUIRED? <input type="checkbox"/> Submitted <input type="checkbox"/> 4/5th's Vote Required <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> N/A	

(19) ADMINISTRATIVE OFFICE REVIEW	<p style="font-size: 1.2em; font-family: cursive;">OK Don Bulshi</p> <div style="position: relative; height: 100px;"> D-1 (3-7-06) </div>
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County of San Luis Obispo • Public Health Department

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Gregory Thomas, M.D., M.P.H.
County Health Officer
Public Health Director

TO: Board of Supervisors

FROM: Gregory W. Thomas, M.D., M.P.H., Public Health Administrator

DATE: March 7, 2006

SUBJECT: Request to approve authorization of a Disease Prevention Demonstration Project and Syringe/Needle Exchange Project

Recommendation

It is recommended that the Board authorize 1) the Health Agency to develop and implement a local Disease Prevention Demonstration Project (DPDP) as authorized by SB 1159, allowing pharmacists to sell ten (10) or fewer hypodermic needles or syringes, and 2) the legal status for the development of a program that exchanges used syringes and needles for clean syringes and needles, as authorized by AB 547.

Discussion

Approximately 324 individuals in San Luis Obispo County are estimated to have been infected with HIV since the first AIDS case was reported in 1983. Of that number, more than 3/4s has been diagnosed with AIDS. More than 28% of people currently living with AIDS in San Luis Obispo County attribute their infection to injection drug use. Among women living with AIDS in San Luis Obispo County, 36% identify injection drug use as the mode of transmission. Another disease, which is affected by injection drug use, is hepatitis C. There have been 1,496 cases of Hepatitis C reported in San Luis Obispo County since 1996. The United States Public Health Service recommends that individuals who inject drugs use a new, sterile syringe for each injection to prevent the transmission of blood-borne pathogens such as HIV and hepatitis C.

SB 1159 allows access to new, sterile syringes and needles through the proposed Disease Prevention Demonstration Project. The California Pharmacists Association supported this bill, along with the California Medical Association and the California Nurses Association. AB 547 allows counties and cities to authorize programs that allow injection drug users to exchange syringes and needles they have used to inject drugs for clean syringes and needles, in consultation with the State Department of Health Services.

A resolution from the Board of Supervisors is required to establish an SB 1159 DPDP program in a county. For the period commencing April 1, 2005, and ending December 31, 2010 when the law sunsets, this resolution would authorize the Health Agency to develop and implement a local

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Disease Prevention Demonstration Project that will allow pharmacists to make available for sale 10 or fewer hypodermic needles or syringes at any one time to a person 18 years of age or older without a prescription providing that pharmacist works for a pharmacy that is registered for the Disease Prevention Demonstration Project. This project would also direct the Health Agency to develop a project consistent with the legislation, including:

- Informing San Luis Obispo County pharmacies of the project;
- Maintaining a directory of participating pharmacies;
- Securing a statement that the pharmacy will provide the required written or verbal counseling at the sale of hypodermic needles under this project;
- Making available to the participating pharmacies written health education and referral information and materials that may be provided or reproduced to provide written or verbal counseling at the time of sale of syringes under this project;
- Securing confirmation that the pharmacies will provide for the safe disposal of hypodermic needles and syringes.

Contra Costa, Yuba, Yolo, San Francisco, Alameda, Los Angeles, Santa Barbara, Santa Cruz, Santa Clara, Solano, San Mateo, Marin, Sonoma and Humboldt Counties have developed a Disease Prevention Demonstration Project following SB 1159.

AB 547 allows counties and cities to authorize clean needle and syringe exchange programs, in consultation with the State Department of Health Services, as recommended by the United State Secretary of Health and Human Services, that are part of a network of comprehensive services, including treatment services, to combat the spread of HIV and blood-borne hepatitis infection among injection drug users. Thirty-seven California counties have syringe and needle exchange programs.

AB 547 requires approval from the Health Officer and the County Board of Supervisors to authorize exchange programs. Local government, local Public Health officials, and law enforcement shall be given the opportunity to comment on syringe/needle exchange programs on an annual basis. The public shall be given the opportunity to provide input to local leaders to ensure that any potential adverse impacts on the public welfare of syringe/needle exchange programs are addressed and mitigated. The Health Officer shall present annually at an open meeting of the Board of Supervisors a report detailing the status of syringe/needle exchange programs, including relevant statistics on blood-borne infections associated with syringe/needle sharing activity. Law enforcement, administrators of alcohol and drug treatment programs, other stakeholders, and the public shall be afforded ample opportunity to comment at this annual meeting.

For AB 547 the State legislature found the following:

- a) The rapidly spreading acquired immunodeficiency syndrome (AIDS) epidemic, and the more recent spread of blood-borne hepatitis, pose an unprecedented public health crisis in California, and threaten, in one way or another, the life and health of every Californian.
- b) Injection drug users are the second largest group at risk of becoming infected with the human immunodeficiency virus (HIV) and developing AIDS, and they are the primary source of heterosexual, female and perinatal transmission in California, the United States, and Europe.

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- c) According to the Office of AIDS, injection drug use has emerged as one of the most prevalent risk factors for new AIDS cases in California.
- d) Studies indicate that the lack of sterile syringes and needles available on the streets, and the existence of laws restricting syringe/needle availability promote syringe and needle sharing, and consequently the spread of HIV among injection drug users. The sharing of contaminated syringes and needles is the primary means of HIV transmission within the injection drug user population.
- e) Most injection drug users use a variety of drugs, mainly heroin, cocaine, and amphetamines, including methamphetamines. Because amphetamine- and cocaine-injecting drug users inject more frequently than heroin users, their risk of HIV infection is higher.

The State Legislature finds and declares that scientific data from syringe/needle exchange programs in the United State and in Europe have shown that getting injection users to come to syringe/needle exchange program to exchange used hypodermic needles and syringes for clean syringes/needles, can serve as a important bridge to treatment and recovery from drug abuse, and can curtail the spread of human immunodeficiency virus (HIV) among the intravenous drug user population. This is because the syringe/needle exchange programs also provide information about drug treatment resources, disease prevention information, and risk reduction information.

On June of 2005, the Board approved a Preventive Health Grant for Gatehelp, Inc. to implement a pilot syringe/needle exchange program in San Luis Obispo County once it becomes legal to do so. Approval of today's item will give the County the legal status in which this project can be carried out. In a future Board item Drug and Alcohol Services (DAS) will bring forward a contract with Gatehelp, Inc. to fund a one-year syringe exchange program. The funding for this contract is through the State Office of AIDS HIV Prevention Grant.

Other Agency Involvement/Impact

The Public Health Department and the Drug and Alcohol Services Programs of the Health Agency will collaborate on these projects.

Financial Considerations

There are minimal staffing costs associated with the implementation of the Demonstration Project. Approximately two hours per month would be needed to maintain a list of registered pharmacies, providing referral information to those pharmacies and providing data to support the evaluation of the project. No new staff will be required for the project. This item will have no General Fund impact.

There are also minimal County staffing costs associated with authorizing clean syringe and needle exchange programs as the program will be operated by a local Community Based Organization (CBO). Five hours of staff time annually will be required to gather information for the annual community evaluation of the programs.

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Results

The State Office of AIDS is in the process of creating an evaluation advisory panel for the Demonstration Project that will provide guidance for those local health jurisdictions interested in participating in various aspects of the evaluation. San Luis Obispo County will participate in this evaluation process. The Health Agency will report to the State and to the San Luis Obispo County Board of Supervisors on the status of this project, including actions to inform pharmacies, law enforcement and other agencies, the number of participating pharmacies, and other pertinent information in order to evaluate the impact of the Project. It is expected that at least two pharmacies will choose to participate in the Disease Prevention Demonstration Project.

The Public Health Officer will report annually to the Board of Supervisors at an open meeting detailing the status of syringe/needle exchange programs, including relevant statistics on blood-borne infections associated with syringe/needle sharing activity. Law enforcement, administrators of alcohol and drug treatment programs, other stakeholders, and the public shall be afforded ample opportunity to comment at this annual meeting.

The overall goal of both programs is the reduction of HIV and hepatitis incidence in San Luis Obispo County. This reduction will be enhanced by the decrease of syringe/needle sharing and an increase in proper disposal of used syringes/needles.

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